

health

Connect



Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) Notice

Please be advised that effective June 1 through 30, 2004, eligible City of Memphis government employees may elect to enroll in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). An eligible employee is defined as an employee who has at least twenty-five (25) years of pension creditable service. Informational handouts are available in the Benefits Office, Room 428. If you have any questions, please call 576-6761.

Marilyn Pickens
Pension Coordinator

Look Good...Feel Better

Cancer can change your appearance, but it can't take away your spirit. *Look Good...Feel Better* is a free program that helps women look their best during cancer treatment. At *Look Good...Feel Better* sessions, experienced cosmetologists teach cancer patients beauty tips to help minimize the appearance-related side effects of chemotherapy and radiation.

Sessions are open to women currently in treatment. The next *Look Good...Feel Better* session is scheduled for June 28, 2004, from noon to 1 p.m., at City Hall, 4th Floor, Conference Room A.

To make reservations, contact Rolandria Dunlap, Wellness Coordinator, at (901) 576-6460.



2004 health fairs

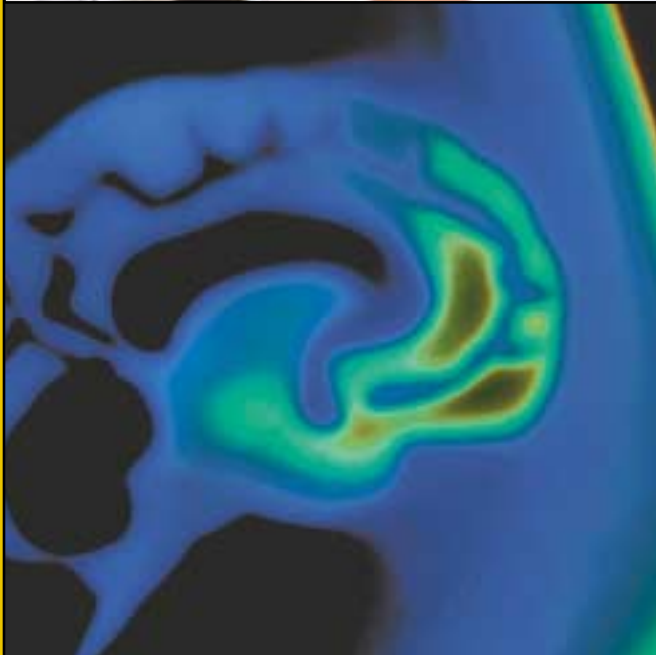
Employees check their health status...and take home prizes!



Mayor Willie Herenton got into the spirit by having his blood pressure checked, while Bobby Coney (left) and Rolandria Dunlap (right), presented important benefit information.

Thanks to everyone who attended our 2004 Division Health Fairs and Super Fair! More than 340 employees took the opportunity to have health checks, learn about their benefits, and have a little fun! In addition to getting great information and entertainment, participants had the opportunity to win prizes. See the back page for more information on the fairs and a list of prizewinners!

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Cancer: Know the Risks

The American Cancer Society estimates that 8.4 million Americans alive today have a personal history of cancer. Every day, more than 1,500 Americans die from some form of cancer. This year, about 500,000 people will succumb to the disease – and more than 1.2 million will be diagnosed with new cases.

Fortunately, research constantly provides new ways of understanding, preventing, and treating cancer. While this constant stream of new information is exciting, it's confusing as well. It's this confusion that leads many people to believe that “everything gives you cancer.”

In fact, there's proof that cancer prevention works. Consider stomach cancer. In the past 60 years stomach cancer deaths have been reduced by 85 percent. The reduction is due to improvements in food storage, changes in use of preservatives, and more interest in “eating healthy.”

As the example shows, knowledge is our greatest weapon to fight cancer. Here's a guide to what the latest research is saying about cancer risks and prevention.

Age—Nearly 80 percent of all cancers are diagnosed in people age 55 or older. Years of exposure to carcinogens (cancer-causing agents) in the environment, in foods, and even in sunlight can begin to alter the genes that control cell growth and division, leading to cancer. Exposure to certain viruses, a lifetime of smoking or drinking alcohol, and poor nutrition also may damage these genes. Ten or more

Sun Hazard: Skin Cancer

It protects your body against heat, light, injury, and infection. It regulates temperature, stores water, fat, and makes vitamin D. It's the largest organ in the body. Any guesses on what this organ is? The skin.

Your skin has the incredible job of protecting everything that is inside your body. You would think that it would be natural to want to protect such a vital organ, but the truth is, not many people do. Every day, people get ready for the day without even considering the skin and the damage the sun can do it. The effects of the sun explains why some people's skin looks leathery, wrinkled, spotted, and sagging. In the worst cases, sun exposure causes skin cancer.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the

years can pass between damaging exposure and detectable cancer. Therefore, signs and symptoms of cancer usually show up later in life.

Aging is inevitable, of course, but not every older person will develop cancer. Age is only one risk factor, and it is not necessarily the most important one.

Ethnic/Racial Background—In the United States, African-Americans are more likely to develop cancer than persons of any other ethnic group. Caucasians tend to have higher rates than Asian-Americans. Researchers are not sure why cancer rates vary by ethnicity.

Genetics—Some people also may be at higher risk of developing cancer because of their genetic makeup. Certain women, for example, inherit a mutation in one of the so-called “breast cancer genes.” These women have some increased risk for developing breast cancer. Researchers have isolated genes involved in colorectal, kidney, prostate, and breast cancer, and the recent mapping of the human genome will likely lead to more discoveries.

It is important to remember that having this type of gene may increase a person’s risk for cancer – but it does not make cancer inevitable.

Lifestyle—The biggest risk factors for developing many forms of cancer are preventable and lifestyle-related: tobacco use, diet, alcohol use, and sexual behavior.

If you are concerned about your risk for developing cancer, or want to learn more about how you can modify your lifestyle to incorporate healthy habits, talk to your doctor.

Benefits Calendar

Nutrition Awareness,

June 16, 2004, noon to 1 p.m.

125 North Main St., Hall of Mayors
(Brown Bag Luncheon)

Look Good... Feel Better (American Cancer Society)

June 28, 2004, noon to 1 p.m.

4th floor, Conference Room A

Retiree’s Health Fair

July 28, 2004, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pipkins Building, Mid-South Fairgrounds

American Heart Association

August 11, 2004, noon to 1 p.m.

125 North Main St., Hall of Mayors
(Brown Bag Luncheon)

American Heart Walk

September 11, 2004, 8 a.m., Auto-Zone Park

American Breast Cancer

September 15, 2004, noon to 1 p.m.

125 North Main St., Hall of Mayors
(Brown Bag Luncheon)

American Breast Cancer Walk,

October 2, 2004, 8 a.m., Riverside Drive

Open Enrollment

September 20 to October 8, 2004

United States. The risk is greatest for people who have fair skin that freckles easily.

There are three major types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Basal cell carcinoma accounts for more than 90 percent of all skin cancers in the United States. It is a slow-growing cancer that seldom spreads to other parts of the body. While less common, melanoma is the deadliest of the three cancers, causing more than 75 percent of all deaths from skin cancer.

When detected early, the rate of successful treatment for skin cancer is high. You should get a skin screening on a regular basis by a physician, even when no symptoms are present in order to try and catch any skin abnormalities in their earliest stage in case they might be cancerous.

In addition, you should do a monthly skin screening on yourself by checking the skin from the top of your head to the bottoms of your feet for the presence of any new moles, marks, or rough spots or the changing of anything that was already present. If anything suspicious is found, your physician should be notified so thorough inspection may be done.

Your skin is a vital organ. Your job is to protect it. Be smart about what you expose it to, especially the sun. Wear protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses, and always wear sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. The little time it takes to protect your skin today will pay off in healthier – and better looking – skin later!

Source: Saint Francis Hospital

Kids' Corner

Childhood Cancer: Dealing with the Diagnosis



When a child is diagnosed with cancer, the parents often have mixed feelings of anger, fear, and sadness. They may feel that it is their fault, that something they did, or did not do, caused the cancer. That is not true, as a doctor should reassure them.

Once a diagnosis of cancer is made, parents should ask as many questions as they need to about the disease, its treatment, and its effect on the child.

How much information should be given to the child? It depends on the child's age and his or her ability to understand. It is generally agreed that any child old enough to understand should be told about the cancer. The child will sense something is wrong, due to either the symptoms or the tests he or she undergoes. By not telling the child, parents run the risk that the child will find out about the cancer from someone else. By telling the child, the parents can help reduce fears, and comfort and reassure the child. Children who know the truth are also more likely to cooperate with treatment.

Childhood cancer touches all members of the family. The usual patterns of family living are disrupted. Parents may have to spend long periods of time away from home and their other children. These children may feel hurt, or even guilty, wrongly believing that something they said or did to their brother or sister caused the cancer. Brothers and sisters of cancer patients should know the truth about cancer and what changes to expect in a child who has cancer.

Treatment

Children with cancer are living longer than ever before. Medical science is making significant

progress in its fight against childhood cancer.

Depending on the type of cancer, a child may have surgery to remove a tumor, or be treated with drugs, radiation, or a combination of methods. More accurate ways to measure how far the cancer has advanced now allow doctors to adjust treatments for each child, so that the child receives only as much treatment as is needed. This limits the side effects of cancer treatments. While most of these side effects stop when treatment ends, some can last a long time, and some remain with the child for a lifetime.

How to Help

Perhaps you have a sibling or friend who is the parent of a child with a severe chronic disease or condition. You can help by:

- learning about the problem, enabling you to be a better listener and sounding board
- learning how to care for the child and offering to provide respite care for parents
- offering to help with chores or errands if a child is hospitalized
- understanding that the child's needs may take precedence over social or family gatherings
- planning activities in which the child can be included.

Source: American Cancer Society

Technology Update

Advancements in Radiation Therapies

It's a shrewd and cunning enemy – cancer. A master of disguise, it invades its targets, eludes detection, and defies even the most potent of weapons. Cancer centers are developing new technology and techniques that allow physicians to target tumors exactly and deliver radiation with reduced side effects.

Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) and **MammoSite Radiation Therapy System** (MammoSite RTS) are being called the greatest advancements in radiation therapy since 1960.

IMRT utilizes a computer system to optimize the delivery of radiation. IMRT can convert radiation beams into millions of possible beam arrangements, shapes, and sizes that are customized for each treatment. This permits radiation oncologists to deliver more cancer-killing radiation to the tumor, while minimizing the radiation to surrounding normal tissue. The result is increased probability of cure and decreased side effects. Patients appreciate that IMRT treatment can be done in about 30 minutes and allows them to quickly resume normal activities.

IMRT is used to treat cancers of the prostate, breast, head and neck, central nervous system, lung and liver.

Mammosite RTS is a new way to deliver radiation therapy from within the breast itself. After removing a tumor, a surgeon implants in its place a small balloon with a tube attached. Patients visit the hospital on an outpatient basis for five days to have the tube connected to a machine that delivers radiation directly to the site.

MammoSite RTS is used as part of a treatment called breast conservation therapy. This therapy is intended to treat breast cancer while avoiding mastectomy (removal of breast tissue). Instead of irradiating the entire breast, much of which may still be healthy, MammoSite RTS targets just the



tissue at greatest risk for the cancer to recur. A major benefit is that the treatment can be carried out in five days, as opposed to the standard six-week course of radiation.

If you have been recently diagnosed with cancer, ask your doctor if you are a candidate for either Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy or Mammosite Radiation Therapy System.

Source: St. Joseph's Health System

Coping Tip: Meditation

Meditation is considered to be one of the best ways to reduce stress and lower risk for serious disease. It can also help people with disease improve their prognosis. Thirty minutes a day is ideal, but even a few minutes can provide relief from stress. Here are some tips to help you meditate:

- Choose a quiet location – free from distractions.
- Light candles, play soothing music, or use calming scents to help you relax.
- Sit in a chair or cross-legged on the floor.
- Close your eyes and breathe in, allowing your rib cage and belly to expand as you breathe in. Breathe out slowly. Concentrate on your breathing. Allow thoughts and feelings to enter your mind. Acknowledge them, allow them to pass, and refocus on your breathing.
- Open your eyes when you feel more relaxed and centered.

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City of Memphis health

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2004 Health Fairs

continued from front

Marion Tucker	DVD Player
Sherry Thompson	\$100 Gift Certificate
Lt. Phifer	GreatWest Cooler
Nate Taylor	St. Francis Gift Basket
Chandrell Ryan	American Cancer Society Bag
Elizabeth Hayes	Methodist Gift Basket
Laverne Partee	Colonial Insurance Bag
Sheila Gray	Mixer
Tarsha Scullark	Toaster
Flora McKinley	Eddie Bauer Chair
Ellen Tate	Iron
Kristi Watkins	Bag of Chocolates
Brenda Clark	Atlas Book
Frank Hester	Colonial Bag
Joyce Washington	CD Holder
Marilyn Johnson	Atlas Book
Gwen Jeffires	Caremark Bag
Regina Davis	City of Memphis Briefcase
Andre Cleveland	Lunch Cooler
Dwan Gillium	Bag of Chocolates
Shelly Shorter	T-shirt
Katie Bohanan	T-shirt
Audrey Williams	T-shirt
Angela Williams	T-shirt
Gale Jones Carson	T-shirt
Sandra Thomas	Barnes and Noble Gift Certificate
Donna Boyhen	CD Holder
Beverly Owens	Eddie Bauer Chair
Burk Renner	Bag of Chocolates

Health fairs were held at five sites throughout the City of Memphis. Divisions served were Fire Services, Police Services, Park Services, Public Works, while all other divisions participated at the Cannon Center Super Fair.

The health fairs provided cholesterol, glucose, vision, prostate, and colorectal cancer screenings.

Information on cardiac risk profiles, blood pressure readings, height and weight goals, nutrition, diabetes, breast, prostate and skin cancer, savings bonds, and life insurance were available as well.



Some fairs had a doctor on-site to answer any medical questions an employee may have had. Each health fair also gave city employees a chance to ask questions of health and pharmacy benefits staff members.